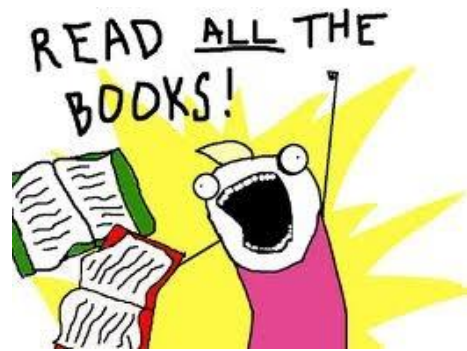


## Shared reading

Shared reading is an interactive reading experience that occurs between an adult and a child. The adult leads the interaction to help develop an understanding and love of books. It helps to

- support language
- build background knowledge
- teach children how books work
- support concepts about print
- teach how meaning is made from print
- children take on more responsibility in reading across time



There is an extra bonus for those introducing a new AAC system, it gives a natural platform to use the AAC and you can plan it in advance so you don't lose the momentum of the story. It is a great way to get to know the layout of the system.

Why should you try to engage your child in books? For one its fun but it also increases

- understanding
- vocabulary
- phonological awareness
- interaction

Also for those who require help with language development for communication we also need to work on all aspects of literacy so reading is essential.



Typically developing children get access to 1,400 hours of literacy instruction before they go to school but often children with additional needs do not get the same input for a variety of reasons. For example, if they can't ask for the same story 150 times in a row it is very unlikely to be chosen for them 150 times in a row! This is a typical stage that children go through and it helps to reinforce messages about how books work. These are often the books that children will "read" by themselves helping them to feel successful when reading. All of this helps develop an understanding and love of books however, if children don't have a method to choose by themselves they are highly unlikely to get this experience. Children with additional needs need more access to books not less, but if they are not interested how do we go about it?

We need to figure out why they are not engaging with books.

First of all are books accessible? Have all their books been put out of reach because the child is destructive? It is more important to have your child interested in torn and eaten books than pristine books that sit untouched on an inaccessible shelf.

Can they physically access the books? There are adaptations that can be made to help with page turning. PrAACtical AAC to the rescue once again, a great article on making page fluffers can be found here

<http://practicalaac.org/practical/5-ways-to-make-page-fluffers-and-spacers/>

The following link contains ideas for physical and content adaptations to make books accessible.

<http://www.pathstoliteracy.org/modifying-books-students-multiple-disabilities>

For those who are less crafty an easy way to get an accessible book is to have an electronic one. It's ok and still counts as a book! Pictello, a story making app, is switch accessible too.

The other way in which books may not be accessible is the content. Whilst picture books may be the correct reading age or have the right amount of content for attention span, a babyish book may not have any appeal left for your aging child, fear not there are many books out there and after you have been inspired you can make your own!

Tar Heel Reader <http://tarheelreader.org/> is a free resource for books. They have Text to Speech capabilities and can be downloaded to PowerPoint so you can change them, print them or add into downloaded to Pictello to play with SGD. The stories were originally made for teenagers and adults to have access to books at their reading level but with higher interest. If you are interested in ones specifically for older children the C/Caution category have a more adult theme some just have toilet humour, others are worth checking out before giving your children free range. Although some of these are very attention grabbing.

There are also many printed picture books that are more appealing to older readers. Jane Farrall has a list on Pinterest found here <https://uk.pinterest.com/janefarrall/>

Often the highest interest books are ones that are all about the person themselves. It is easy to make personal books, for more hints see last week's handout.

So now you have accessible books how do you share reading?

You are aiming to maximise the amount of interaction you have about a book. This may have to be built up with only discussing the book at the end to begin with aiming for an interaction per page over time.

One way to share a story is to Comment, Ask and Respond or CAR.

Comment. E.g. I like that dog

Wait at least 5 seconds but could be over 30 seconds for some children.

Ask. E.g. What did you think of the dog?

Wait at least 5 seconds but could be over 30 seconds for some children.

Respond. E.g. Yes I agree, I liked his big sad eyes.

This can be organised in advance and added in by sticking post it notes in to the book at pre-determined places, this can help make the process easier especially when starting out. If the child doesn't respond you can put in an "I wonder" comment for them. For example "I see you smiling at the dog I wonder if you think he is cute/silly/other appropriate comment". For those that require a long processing time it is worthwhile timing the response gap as 30 seconds can seem like a very long time when no one is speaking. When someone speaks during this processing time the train of thought may be lost and the process needs to start again.

For those also starting out with AAC systems, adding in the pathways in the system on a separate post it is also very handy.

When thinking of the types of questions to ask, you put a CROWD in the car.

The CROWD refers to:

Completion (of phrase) - ask the child to finish the sentence or phrase, this could be pre-recorded in a simple switch which they press.

Recall – can they remember what happened earlier in the story?

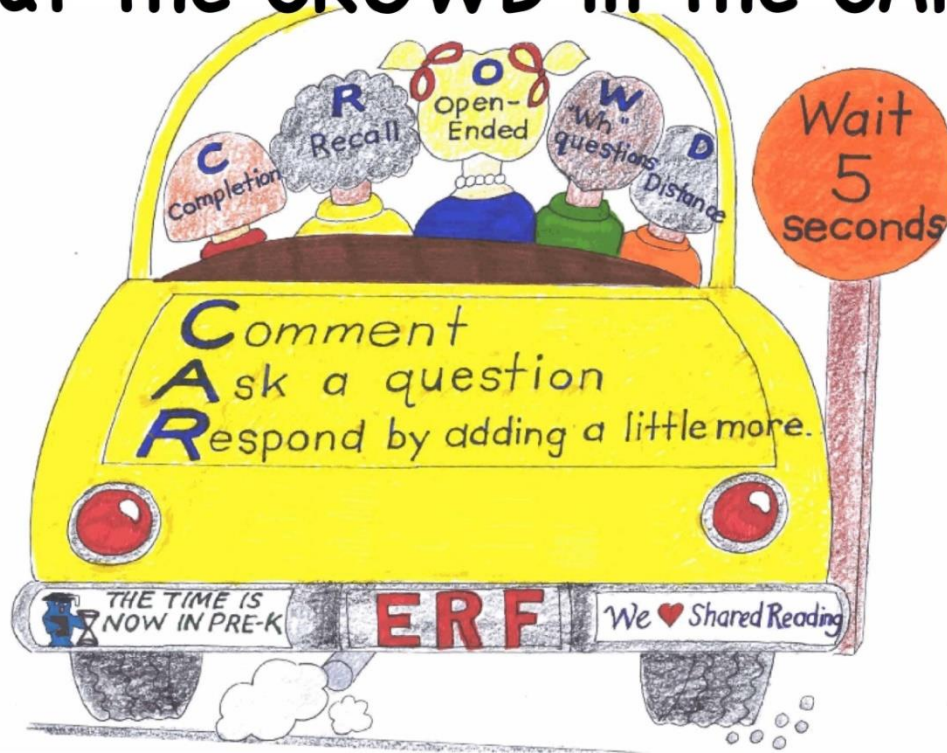
Open-ended – often about an opinion.

Wh questions – what, where, when, why, how and who questions.

Distance – can they remember when they did or heard a story about a similar incident or event?

These questions can all refer to the text or the picture (or both) in the story

# Put the CROWD in the CAR!



Personally, I found a lot of this fairly hard to follow in the beginning. I don't like books to be destroyed or the flow of stories to be interrupted. Waiting 30 seconds for a response without saying a word is nigh on impossible. It does get easier so as with all things, take it easy and go slowly to start if it seems unnatural. It is more likely to become a habit for both you and your child if you take it at a pace that is easy for you and your child to accomplish.

The whole point of shared reading is to foster a love of books and to teach an understanding of what books are, print concepts and how to comprehend them. The most important thing about it is that it is fun, so don't be too clinical or prescriptive; you can make it up as you go along!

